



Padre Island National Seashore
SandDollar



Friday, July 2, 2004

Superintendent

This has been an exciting couple of weeks indeed with the 2002 Kemp's ridley nesting record being surpassed this year. Each of us can take pride in this accomplishment, because it is truly a team effort that makes something as difficult as species recovery become reality. The Kemp's Ridley recovery is a compelling story that proves what can be accomplished when science is applied by dedicated hard working professionals like all of you. Well done!

Several important initiatives for the park that have been long in planning are coming close to being realized. We have begun the long awaited narrowband/digital radio transition, including new tower and design, which will greatly improve our communication ability and our personal safety. The new turtle lab design is nearly complete and will soon be going to contract. Bird Island Basin rehabilitation project design has been completed and contract negotiations have started. All of these will significantly improve our ability to serve the visiting public and protect the resources of this beautiful park.

Employee suggestions that have been coming forward are really appreciated and helpful, keep them coming!

Take care of this place, each other, and stay safe!

Colin

Colin's schedule:

Monday, 7/05 – 4th of July Holiday
Tuesday, 7/06 – Squad, In the Park
Wed., 7/07 – In the Park
Thurs., 7/08 – In the Park, Mtg. in Town
Friday, 7/09 – In the Park

Safety Notes--

Your contributions are greatly appreciated for the SandDollar and the safety bulletin board. Please send safety contributions to Pat.

Let's continue to encourage each other to be safe.

Make it a safe day.

Employees Association News -

Administration

FEGLI Open Season Begins in September

Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced that open season for the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI) will be from September 1 through September 30, 2004. The program consists of basic life insurance coverage and three options that include coverage for up to five times an employee's base salary plus coverage for family members. In most cases, a new federal employee is automatically covered by basic life insurance. The types and amounts of coverage available are not changing. During the open season, federal and postal employees will be able to enroll in the program or increase or change current coverage without having a physical or answering any questions about their health.

Changes Are Coming to the TSP Loan Program

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) has announced that effective July 1, 2004; three changes will be made to the TSP loan program. They are: (1) A \$50 fee will be deducted from the amount of each new loan; (2) Two general purpose loans at the same time will no longer be permitted (however, one can have both a general purpose and a residential loan); and (3) Upon paying off a TSP loan, the TSP

participant will not be eligible to apply for another loan of the same type for 60 days.

Emerging Leaders Consortium Module 300: Congressional Actions and the NPS ---to receive credit, attendance on both days is required	06/28/2004	Monday	1:00-4:00
Emerging Leaders Consortium Module 300: Congressional Actions and the NPS ---to receive credit, attendance on both days is required	06/29/2004	Tuesday	1:00-4:00
Gateway Communities: Keys to Success	07/08/2004	Thursday	12:30-3:30
Working With NPS Agreements for Partnerships (Module 1): Tools for Effective Partnering	07/14/2004	Wednesday	12:00-4:00
Working With NPS Agreements for Partnerships (Module 2): Developing and Managing Agreements for Partnerships	07/15/2004	Thursday	12:00-4:00
NPS Recreation and Preservation Programs	07/19/2004	Monday	1:30-3:30
Resolving Performance Issues	08/10/2004	Tuesday	2:00-2:00
Dealing with Misconduct	08/10/2004	Tuesday	10:00-12:00
Retirement Planning for New Employees	08/26/2004	Thursday	2:00-4:00
Communication: The Key to Performance Management	09/09/2004	Thursday	2:00-4:00
From Hugger to Harasser: The True Story Behind Sexual Harassment	09/09/2004	Thursday	10:00-12:00
NPS Recreation and Preservation Programs	09/13/2004	Monday	2:00-4:00
Position Descriptions: What Every Supervisor Should Know	09/21/2004	Tuesday	2:00-4:00
Managing Performance	09/21/2004	Tuesday	10:00-12:00
Administrative Grievances: What You Do Not Know Could Hurt You	09/23/2004	Thursday	2:00 -4:30
IDP Interpretive Media Development (Module 311)	09/28/2004	Tuesday	12:00-4:00

PAIS-E-7, Park Ranger (Protection), GS-0025-5/7/9, all sources (all qualified) closed on June 30.

UPCOMING TEL EVENTS:

TEL Training

The trailer will be used for TEL training on July 8, 14, 15 and 19.

One new course on June 30th - Performance Management Counseling. This 1 hour course is being offered by the Army National Guard, thus, you will not dial in using the Harvard Elite black box and you will not be using your push to talk mics. This course will count as 1 hour towards the supervisory training requirement.

Facility Management

Glenda Hammond will be on annual leave from July 5 - July 8.

The RV trailer in the residence area will be demolished the week of July 5th.

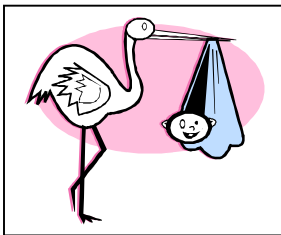
The order for the new fuel system has been submitted. It should be implemented in the next few months.

The contractor plans to finish installing the sprinkler system by Friday, July 2. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, the final inspection will be done the week of July 5th.

Facility Management has formulated a new FMSS work request form. It is more streamlined than the previous form and will incorporate both maintenance and vehicle work requests. A copy of the new form has already been sent to all employees through LotusNotes and should be used immediately. Requesters will fill out the top part of the form and personnel assigned to the request will fill out the bottom part. We think it is a much clearer and less confusing form than has been used in the past. Thank you for your cooperation in using this new form.

Interpretation

Protection



The Scoggins family has recently announced that they are expecting a new baby. Congratulations Randy and Kelly!

As a follow-up to last week's SandDollar submission about lightning strikes we learned later in the week that the park had numerous additional fire ignitions. Pat Donohue conducted an overflight of the park on Friday and observed 35 fires that had started most likely during the June 22 lightning storm. All the fires were small in size and were extinguished by the accompanying thundershowers or lack of fuel.

During the night of June 30, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Border Patrol, and park rangers arrested 21 individuals involved in an immigrant smuggling operation. The immigrants had been brought up South Padre Island, crossed over the Mansfield Channel by raft,

and then transported by smugglers north through the park. Among the arrestees were 6 Chinese and 9 Brazilian nationals.

The flag is to be flown again at full staff on July 6th following the Forth of July holiday weekend.

As a reminder there are no fireworks permitted in the National Seashore. Many of you recall we had a three day fire on the north boundary two years ago that originated from fireworks on North Beach. Have a safe Forth of July.

Resources Management

Personnel:

- Katie Key has accepted one of the Biotech positions and has started back at the park. We would like to welcome her back to the park.
- Arlene will be on Annual Leave July 2 -12.

Projects:

- The lightning strike fire at the 2.5 mile marker was mapped and documented. The fire burned 26 acres. We are planning to map the fire documented near Malaquite and will then have an acreage for the fire.
- We are continuing the Great Blue Heron survey every Friday. Many of the eggs have hatched and the juveniles are learning to fly and eat on their own. Island 117, the island north of BIB, has 7 juvenile Great Blue Herons, 70 juvenile Great Egrets, 19 juvenile Reddish Egrets, 46 juvenile Tricolor Herons, and 71 juvenile Snowy Egrets.
- We are currently working on the Fire Management plan and other planning documents for the park.

Division of Sea Turtle Science and Recovery

Lisa Marie Presley found a green sea turtle nest just north of the Padre Island National Seashore 40 mile marker on July 1. The nest contained 114 eggs. Congratulations Lisa!

Through July 1, 40 Kemp's ridley, two loggerhead, and one green sea turtle nests have been found on the Texas coast this year. Eggs from all sea turtle nests except those found on South Padre Island and Boca Chica Beach are transferred to our incubation facility at Padre Island National Seashore for protected care. The eggs from South Padre and Boca Chica are transferred to a corral (screen enclosed area) on South Padre Island.

Nests 10, 11, and 14 have been released - At about 9 pm on June 26, 96 hatchlings were released from the 99 eggs in nest 11. The hatchlings entered their frenzy between 7 and 8 pm and had to be released immediately. Thank you to Colin, Cynthia, and her friend Janice who helped with this impromptu release. At about 7 am on June 27, 84 hatchlings were released from nest 10. About 100 visitors attended this public release. The hatchlings were much slower during this release than during the release the night before, and took over an hour to enter the water. Four other stragglers from that nest were released the next day, for a total of 88 hatchlings released from 91 eggs in that nest. Three hatchlings from nest 14 went into their frenzy and had to be released at about 10 am on June 29. At about 7 am on June 30, we released the 94 remaining hatchlings from nest 14, for a total of 97 hatchlings released from this nest of 100 eggs. About 110 visitors attended the release on June 30 and cheered as the active turtles entered the surf!

Nests 15 and 16 are due to be released sometime(s) between about July 3 and July 8.

MEDIA EVENT honoring the donation of \$15,000 from Unilever and celebrating this year's record breaking ridley nesting year in Texas will be held sometime between July 8 and 13. The event will center around the release of hatchlings from the first arribada (nesting aggregation) that we had at the park this year. We will arrive at the exact date for the event based on the hatching schedule. Hopefully, a few of the nests collected during this first arribada will be ready for release at the same time. Unlike other releases during the year, this release will be held in front of Malaquite. After the release, the activities will move to the Visitor Center, where some brief statements made by Donna and a representative of Unilever. After the remarks,

cake and punch will be served. We hope to make this a celebration of this amazing year!

The hatchlings from the clutches held in our incubation facility will be released when they are physically ready and enter their infantile frenzy, typically sometime during a span of a few days that Donna predicts. The release date predictions for the nests currently held in the incubation facility are listed in the table below. This table will also be posted on the Padre Island National Seashore website (www.nps.gov/pais/), under the heading of upcoming events. As during past years, the staff and public will be invited to attend as many of our hatchling releases as possible. Public releases are announced to begin at 6:30 am, to allow enough time for the Interpretation Division staff to give a brief program to the public before we place the hatchlings on the beach between 6:45 am and 7:00 am. Please note that we are unable to invite people to watch those releases that occur when the turtles enter their frenzy at unpredictable times, during the night, or during weather conditions that could be unsafe for the turtles or people (i.e., thunderstorms, very high tides, etc.). So, to increase the chance of seeing a release, we advise interested individuals traveling from out of town to try to attend when hatchlings from more than one nest are predicted to be released. As we near the predicted release dates for each clutch, Donna will update information about the releases on the Hatchling Hotline (telephone 361-949-7163). As during previous years, the Hatchling Hotline will be the best source of the most current information on the next release.

Please note that recent thunderstorm activity has made it very difficult to predict hatchling release schedules. These weather conditions tend to speed up hatching and provoke the turtles into entering their frenzy. Some of the recent clutches have been released at 47 or 48 days of incubation. If this shorter incubation continues, then the release of many of the upcoming nests will be more towards the beginning of the projected release windows listed below.

**PREDICTED HATCHLING RELEASE DATES FOR NESTS BEING HELD AT
THE
PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE INCUBATION FACILITY**

Nest # (Species)	Date Found	Hatchlings will Likely be Released Sometime Between these Dates
1 (Kemp's ridley)	April 5	Released May 24-28
2 (Kemp's ridley)	April 17	Released June 6
5 (Kemp's ridley)	April 26	Released June 14
6, 7 (Kemp's ridley)	May 1	Released June 19-21
8 (Kemp's ridley)	May 2	Released June 23-24
10, 11 (Kemp's ridley)	May 11	Released June 26-27
14 (Kemp's ridley)	May 14	Released June 29-30
15, 16 (Kemp's ridley)	May 17	July 3-8
18 (Kemp's ridley)	May 21	July 7-12
19-24 (Kemp's ridley)	May 22	July 8-13
25 (Kemp's ridley)	May 23	July 9-14
27 (Kemp's ridley)	May 30	July 16-21
28-29 (Kemp's ridley)	June 3	July 20-25
30-34 (Kemp's ridley)	June 5	July 22-27
35 (Kemp's ridley)	June 6	July 23-28
36 (Kemp's ridley)	June 8	July 25-30
38 (Loggerhead)	June 13	August 1-6
40 (Kemp's ridley)	June 16	August 2-7
41 (Kemp's ridley)	June 21	August 7-12
42 (Kemp's ridley)	June 22	August 8-13
43 (Green)	July 1	August 20-25

Note that sea turtle nests 3 (released), 4 (released), 9 (released), 12 (released), 13, 17, 26, 37, and 39 are being held in a corral on South Padre Island, Texas

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